

World Vision response to today's FAO Food Price Index Announcement

June 7, 2011

World Vision's food security policy adviser Sheri Arnott said:

"High global food prices and low food stocks continue to be a grave concern as we move into the growing season in North America and Europe—which provide most of the world's maize and wheat for global trade. A combination of drought and flooding can lead to unpredictable harvests, which historically have caused food prices to spike. Many communities in developing countries are now entering what's known as "the hungry season", when their food supplies run out and they import food from the global market. This year World Vision is very concerned families simply will not be able to afford enough food to survive."

"Today's food prices are intractably high for families who are spending up to 80 per cent of their income on food and struggling every day to prevent malnutrition. We know, from the 2008 food crisis, high food prices force people to purchase less nutritious food, or forgo things like school expenses and medical costs."

"As an aid agency we're working with poor small-scale farmers to help them produce more food so they can weather high food prices, but it's also critical Canada keeps funding small-scale agriculture. Getting agricultural projects and support to children and families is critical—and must be done before food shortages and malnutrition spread. West Africa shows how a good regional harvest helped insulate this region from the price crisis as they haven't had to purchase food from the global market where prices have been prohibitively high."

"While Canada deserves credit as the only G-8 nation to deliver on its 2009 food security promises, and its leadership on child and maternal health, children and moms are again in jeopardy of not having enough food to live. All of the great intentions for child and maternal health are now at risk. Canada must provide additional funding for small-holder farmers and emergency food aid."

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